



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

the late royal hospital) and Walter Istelep, who was about entering into the priory for life, particularly mentions that when he was to dine with the prior in the public hall, it was stipulated this Walter was to sit on the prior's right hand, and was to have for his "*evening potation*" three *flaggons of the best ale*, but when he dined separately in his own suite of chambers he was to have *ten flaggons of the best ale*. Let it be observed that these ales, &c., were not as now, the produce of public breweries,—no such establishments then existed. Each family had its own brewery, and thus possessed one source of domestic economy and employment within itself. Nor was this confined to the wealthier classes, for even the very poorest description of people brewed their own drink heretofore in Ireland; and in the list of those who paid to the crown the old custom called the "*Mary Gallon*," being one gallon of ale for every brewing, I have seen tanners, bakers, *fishermen, husbandmen, and even labourers*, regularly entered, as brewing their own malt drink. In the course of time, however, an accumulating body of excise laws and regulations discouraged this; the private brew-house gradually disappeared, and it would be difficult now to name any district in the kingdom where private families continue still to brew.

Aqua Vitæ, or whiskey, that bad substitute for all that was generous, wholesome, and good, is but of comparatively recent introduction or invention. Whiskey in the middle of the sixteenth century (and the fact is now undeniable) was found to be made amongst the English settlements in Ireland for supplying to the native Irish.—Queen Mary was the first who endeavoured to check this evil, and the parliamentary enactments then made, describe whiskey to be a drink, "*nothing profitable to be used, and drunken*, is now universally, throughout this realm of Ireland, made especially in the borders of the *Irishry*, and for the furniture of *Irishmen*, and thereby much corn, grain, and other things are consumed, spent, and wasted; to the great hindrance, loss, and damage, of the poor inhabitants of the realm:" wherefore it was ordered no person but peers, &c., should make it without license from government. The restrictive or licensing power, thus through the best motives vested in the crown, was afterwards turned to good account by James the First, who rewarded his favourites (most of them noblemen, as will be seen in Mr. Lodge's work), by licenses to *make aqua vitæ*, and to keep public houses for sale thereof. But this system of licensing proved so profitable at length, that whiskey-selling became one of the regular items of the excise revenue, and so continues to the present day.

I never view the Methers, believe me, without melancholy reflections. I look on it as a surviving testimony of that lamentable change in the national beverage which I have above described; and convinced that whiskey is that "*furniture*" which debases the mind, the domestic habits and morals of a nation, I hope I may live to see it again prohibited, and to witness a foaming or sparkling Methers on each man's table.

I will now only add what may be useful when that day arrives, namely, that to drink out of the Methers, you must apply one of the four corners, and not the side to your mouth. When Lord Townshend left the vice-royalty of Ireland, he had two massive silver methers made in London, where they were regularly introduced at his dinner parties; the guests most usually applied the side of the vessel to the mouth, and seldom escaped with a dry neck-cloth, vest, or *doublet*; Lord Townshend, however, after enjoying the mistake, usually called on his friend, the late Colonel O'Reilly, (afterwards Sir Hugh Nugent, by the king's sign manual) to teach the drill, and *handle the methers in true Irish style*. I am Sir, &c.,

Henry-street.

W. A.—N.

USEFUL HINTS AND EXPERIMENTS.

ON PLANTING FOREST AND FRUIT-TREES, POTATOES, &c.

Sir—Having lately read in one of the numbers of the Dublin Penny Journal an advice respecting the utility of planting woods in Ireland, in which I fully agree, especially on mountains, or if on the low lands, in broad belts around

the farm, or at least on the west side, I will venture an opinion on the most proper trees to plant, viz:—oak, larch, ash, elm, sycamore and horse-chestnut; as for the other kind of forest trees, they are mere thrash: now the proportion in every one hundred trees that would be planted, should be two oaks, fifty larch, twenty-five of ash, fifteen elms, four sycamore, and four horse chestnuts: they should be planted in regular rows, three feet asunder, and the same distance in each row; one acre of Irish plantation measure will contain seven thousand eight hundred and forty trees. The first thinning may take place about twenty years after they are planted; every alternate row should be cut out, except the oaks, and these should be planted far asunder. This thinning will give three thousand nine hundred and twenty trees, which if sold at six pence per tree, will produce the sum of ninety-eight pounds sterling, which would be nearly five pounds per annum for the acre of land on which they grew; the remainder will certainly pay for the cost of all the trees, planting, and interest of money, &c.

The reason which I will give for planting trees in regular rows is, a cart can be brought through woods so planted, whereby the timber can be carried off easier; besides a man can cut the grass which will grow between the trees much easier, and carry it away on his back or that of a horse, which grass will feed cattle in houses during the summer. Every seventh tree in the first row should be an oak, and also in every seventh row, so that in the course of years the wood will be composed of oak trees only.

In order to give protection to forest trees, every gentleman and farmer should enclose a piece of land, and plant it with osiers; a few might be allowed to grow so strong as would be fit to make handles for shovels, forks, rakes, &c.—the marshy part of a farm would answer this purpose best.

If every farmer would rear a few forest trees in his garden, it would give a great stimulus to the planting of woods, even if they should plant seedlings, the cost would be small, in comparison with paying several pounds for well grown trees. There would also be another advantage, the trees reared on a farm would grow much better than those reared in a regular nursery and good soil, not taking into consideration the probable difference as to situation of country; particularly if the farm is on mountain, and the trees reared on the lowland, and which generally is the case. Trees when registered becomes the tenant's property.

Having read of a new method of propagating fruit-trees, without the labour or delay of sowing the quinces, &c., accordingly, on the 6th of February last, I stuck into whole potatoes, (as was recommended) proper grafts of apple-trees, pears, apricots, and cherries; I then placed the potatoes in a drill, and put the usual covering of earth upon them. The result has been, I had a crop of potatoes but not fruit trees.

On the 5th of April last, I planted Bangor potatoes (also without cutting them) in holes three feet apart, and in order to mark the places, I stuck into the earth shoots of last year's growth, of pears, apricots, and cherries; also apples, none of which shoots took root, although some of them threw out small leaves.

Most of the Bangor potatoes rotted, and such of them as did grow, were, in the course of the summer, cut off by slugs, the clay which I heaped round them formed cones, and also gave protection to these slugs.

Since I have mentioned Bangor potatoes, allow me to state a few reasons formed by Gardeners, &c.; why they rot so frequently, even when planted in beds, (by some called lazy-beds) having stable manure laid under them and the furrows so deep as to carry off all water: First, by reason of bruises received on board ship from Cumberland; second, bruises received on board ship, and then impregnated with sea-water; third, that they are taken out of the ground before they are ripe; fourth, that frost is allowed to come at them. It is very probable that some or all of the above conjectures are correct: it would be well if the true reason was discovered and prevented.

With regard to manure, allow me to mention an idea that occurred to me recently respecting that invaluable ar-

nicle to the farmer, and to the small landholder in particular: they should be very careful to prevent the urine of cattle, night soil, and soap-suds running into rivers or ditches. The idea I have alluded to, is particularly for the benefit of the cotter's garden; no person should be above his business in any station of life; and as an Irish cotter's family depend very much upon the produce of their potato-garden, every means possible should be taken to provide manure for it. We are informed there is in China a penal law against any person who throws night-soil into rivers, &c. In England children gather the dung of cattle off the roads; and surely the children of an Irish cotter could not be better employed than in collecting the same for their little garden. In England the labourer has support given him when idle, out of the parish rate; but in Ireland he is left to shift for himself and family, and that in a country where there are very few gentry, and rents gathered to be spent any where but in it.

There is no method so beneficial to the small landholder to plant potatoes as in the drill two feet asunder, it will require less manure than the ridge (lazy-beds); weeds (such as docks) can be rooted up, also some stalks which grow out of old seed; the frequent hoeing between fertilizes the ground.

In September, 1830, as I was riding between Graig and Ross, I saw most miserable crops of potatoes; and I am sure if they were planted in drills, as above described, the same land would have produced five times the weight. An Irish cotter plants his garden in the latter end of May, when there is no great fear of the potato seed rotting. If a few ounces of flat Dutch cabbage-seed were sowed by him in June, the plants would be fit to put out when the potatoes were taken up, especially pink-eyed potatoes; this crop could be sold in the next town, or eaten by the family; the potatoe stalks should be carefully pulled up at the time when the potatoes are being dug out; they will be useful to thatch, cover the potato-pits, make beds for the pigs, &c. Another advice I would give to farmers and cotters is, to shear their thorn hedges once every year; it would make a country look neat, also make it warmer in winter; it would give employment to men when nothing else could be done. The cotter has, unfortunately, too much time on his hands, especially in winter. He might borrow a shears; if not, a few families could subscribe and buy one. A person who has but a few acres of land should never let a tree grow on it, but the higher the hedges are the better, if kept clipped.

With Cobbett's method of feeding a cow the whole year round upon one rood of land, I don't agree; neither with his plan of growing cabbage. After raising the plants in the seed-bed, he gives directions to plant them out in rows 8 inches asunder and 8 inches apart in the rows; also to hoe between them often. Now I think there are very few persons who could perform that work without tramping down most of the crop. I think there is not much nutriment in cabbage (except the rape kind); if rabbits are fed on it they will die of the rot, which is certainly dropsy. Turnips will feed any kind of cattle, because there is an aromatic virtue in the peel and leaves, but nothing of this kind in cabbage. Turnips can be raised upon land that half the weight of mangel worzel could not be got from; but of all esculant roots the potato takes the lead for nutriment. That root will be eaten by every living animal on the farm, and will support life with a profit; besides one half the manure will do for the same space of ground that cabbage would require. Although I have said so much in favour of potatoes in opposition to cabbage, for the purpose of feeding all the animals upon a farm, I hope to see that day when our peasants will be able to buy wheat bread for their support, more than what they can do now. As potatoes cannot be saved more than one year, there will be a periodical famine in Ireland, and which, I am afraid, will take place next year in consequence of the partial failure of the potato-crop.

There is a kind of clover called lucerne, which will grow in sandy ground better than in any other land, the roots of which will go down thirty feet or more; it may be cut five or six times during the summer. It must be sowed in drills eighteen inches asunder, and the ground hoed between the drills after every time it is cut. Cattle must not

be allowed on it any time of the year. This crop wants no manure; only keep it free from weeds, and it will last twenty years. Hills of gravel, the grass of which is burnt up every summer, could be profitably employed if planted with lucerne.

In a country where fuel is scarce, French furze hedges ought to be planted. French furze will grow seven feet high, and may be cut every three years. J. J.

In addition to the foregoing observations we would remark that one grand object should be to raise those articles at home, which we import from other countries, at a great expense, while their supply is often scanty and precarious. Ireland seems well calculated for raising hemp and flax, and this would secure us from the necessity of applying to America to increase the quantity of these essential articles and reduce their price.

THE BATTLE OF THE PROFESSORS.

Some ages ago, when the wise and the learned,
Superciliously proud, to believe would have spurned
That the earth (as an ancient philosopher wrote,)
Is an animal huge, that in ether does float;
That the trees are the bristles that grow on his skin,
And men are the reptiles that nestle within;
When they know that the world just resembles a shoe
As much as it does Heraclitus' canoe;
Nor believed that its shape (tho' the notion had origin
With Anaximander,) is much like a rolling-pin,
And yet inconsistently choose to forget
The lessons that good old Pythagoras set;
When with quibbles sophistic, and logical prate,
They astonished the vulgar and turned their own pate;
'Twas when sages were just in this pitiful plight,
That Ptolemy stepped in to set them all right:
"And," says he, "my good friends, if you have any
discerning,

You sure must admit my proficience in learning;
And now as I see the wide world by the ears,
I'll tell you the truth with regard to the spheres."
Then he shewed them the earth sitting easy and quiet,
While the planets and stars made a terrible riot,
And kicked up such fuss with their galloping round he
That 'twas surely enough to amaze and confound her;
And then that he might all professors surpass,
He stuck o'er the concave a heaven of glass,
In which he bored holes, that the stars there might twinkle;
And polished the whole without leaving a wrinkle;
Then to make his strange system with nature consist all,
He formed epicycles and heavens of crystal;
And wove them together with cunning so wary,
You as well might unravel the web of a fairy.
The wise were just thinking the thing wouldn't do
When Tycho stepped in and he made a low bow;
(But tried with his hand his visage to muffle,
As he haplessly once lost his nose in a scuffle.)
And cried, "gentlemen surely you've all had enough
Of talk from this vile astronomical puff:
What! a heaven of crystal! defend us all from it;
What then can we think of the flight of a comet?
It would batter his head when through ether he'd sail;
Or he'd smash it in bits with his fiery tail!
Such a system to make, and to blow such a breeze,
One might just as well say the moon's made of green
cheese;

And with what disrespect of the sun, too, he spoke;
Believe me, learned friends, that the matter's no joke,
You might better extinguish than thus to confound him,
For in their due times, all the planets go round him.
I grant you, that once, in the space of a year,
And, also, in twenty-four hours, it is clear
That the spheres, (as the Aristotelians well know,)
In their race round the heavens run round the world too."
The wise smoothed their beards, and looked over their
chart,

Still thinking and doubting, when René des Cartes,
With a look magisterial, and logical brow,
Exclaimed, "you've been groping in darkness till now,
With your flying glass heavens from reason you've flown
And a mere running foot-boy have made of the sun;